Page 4 September 2001 **Arkansas Conservation News**

DID YOU KNOW?

Employees have a chance to identify high-priority technology issues and tools needed to provide quality assistance to clients.

Ideas are requested to help deliver quality assistance in the following areas: technical tools that need to be developed or improved; technology obstacles that hinder implementation of sound conservation assistance; technology problems or issues that need solutions; and other technology needs.

Send ideas to Jim Caudle by e-mail at jim.caudle@ar.usda.gov or fax to (501) 301-3189 by Sept. 28.

A conservation tillage workshop, sponsored by Monsanto, is from 9 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Sept. 13 at the Riverfront Hilton in North Little Rock.

forage production.

Bobby Bradley at (501) 301-3164.

Changes and corrections to the July 2001 directory must be e-mailed to updates@ar.usda.gov in order for the



servation District used the buffer display as their fair booth and won first place at the county fair. Other displays available through team leaders include: recruiting and A Health Community Needs a Healthy Environment.

Subjects include no-till pasture and and the new directory when it is published. Additional copies of the For more information, contact directory will be made available as soon as they are produced.

Only emergency purchases are allowed until further notice. Emergency purchases must be approved by the changes to take place on the web site appropriate management team member.

Comings & Goings

James Ellis is the new biologist on servation technician at the Marshall the technical services staff at the state FSC. office. He transferred from the Corps of Engineers.

Charles Grose is the new soil conservation technician at the North Little Rock Field Service Center. He transferred from the Heber Springs FSA.

Wendy Hendrix is the new soil con-

Derrek Nokes is the new soil conservation aide at the Searcy FSC.

David Sullivan is the new civil engineer at the Lonoke Irrigation Office.

Mark Van Lear is the new soil scientist on the soil survey staff at the state office. He transferred from Virginia.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination USDA's TARGET Center at 202-720-2600 (voice and TDD).

in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national

To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, of Civil Rights, Room 326W, Whitten Building, 14th and Independence or marital or family status. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call (202) 720-5964 (voice Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication and TDD).

of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

CALENDAR

EVENTS

September

Sept. 16-20 -- National Organization of Professional Hispanic NRCS Employees Meeting, Fort Worth, Texas.

Sept. 18 -- West Central Area Arkansas Association of Conservation Districts Meeting, Fort Smith.

Sept. 19 -- Federal Employee's Association Meeting, Little Rock.

Sept. 19-20 -- Arkansas Soil and Water Conservation Commission Meeting, Jonesboro.

Sept. 24 -- Management Team Meeting, Little Rock.

October

Oct. 4-5 -- Soil and Water Conservation Society Fall Meeting, Little Rock.

Oct. 12 -- Agroforestry Field Day, Favetteville.

Oct. 16-17 -- Management Team Meeting, Little Rock.

Natural Resources Conservation Service

Room 3416, Federal Bldg., 700 W. Capitol Ave., Little Rock, AR 72201

September 2001



A newly constructed irrigation storage reservoir in the Grand Prairie project area.

Project delivers water to Grand Prairie

Approximately 86 percent of water since 1904, the alluvial supplies of irrigation water. irrigation in east-central Arkansas, the Grand Prairie, is withdrawn from the Mississippi River Valley alluvial aquifer.

The Grand Prairie is one of the beneath the surface. major rice and soybean producing areas in the United States. Loss of rice and soybean production in this area would result in severe economic and social repercussions to the local, state and national economies.

A main source of agricultural

the water needed for crop aquifer annually provides millions of gallons of water but is quickly being depleted.

In 1937, water from the alluvial aquifer was typically 50 feet

However, today the National Water Management Center reports water is typically 105 feet below the surface.

In some areas, drilling into the deeper Sparta aquifer, the area's only reliable source of drinking water, is necessary for adequate

"Without an adequate solution to the region's groundwater problems, studies predict the aguifer will be commercially useless by 2015," said Tony Stevenson, state conservation engineer.

The recommended plan combines on-farm conservation measures and irrigation storage reservoirs with an irrigation canal network to deliver surface water

See Grand Prairie, Page 3

September 2001 Page 2 **Arkansas Conservation News**

Total Cost Accounting System goes on-line

Training on new web-based program begins for all employees

The way employees enter their time and attendance into the Total Cost Accounting System is about to change.

Arkansas is one of the first states to begin entering the data on-line.

"The new system starts with this pay period; however, since everyone hasn't been trained time keepers will enter everyone's time," said Tanya Jacks, Arkansas TCAS coordinator. "Employees will begin entering their own time during pay period 18."

"Employees should check their CAMS ID and password before pay period 18 begins."

-- Tanya Jacks TCAS coordinator

Timekeepers received training Aug. 21 and the management team and those who will be providing training to field office log in and password. employees attended a session Aug. 29.

Training for all employees should be completed by Sept. 14. "The assistants for field operations are responsible for scheduling and providing training to the employees

Washington, assistant state conservationist for strategic planning.

State office and Lonoke Irrigation Office employees receive training Sept. 11 and 12. Management team members will designate staff to attend one of the sessions.

The Web TCAS Deployment Team has established a preview site at http://calais.itc.nrcs.usda.gov/ IAS TEST/webtcas/.

"I encourage employees to browse through the employee preview screens and supervisors the supervisor preview screens," Jacks said. "The site must be accessed through Microsoft Internet Explorer v.5. Netscape Navigator will not work."

Once the training is completed, employees will enter their time at www.nrcs.usda.gov/ webtcas. To log on, employees use their CAMS Instructions for using the site are also available on line on the home page.

"Employees should check their CAMS ID and password at http:// cams.usda.gov before pay period 18 begins," Jacks within their area," said Doris said. "If needed, human financial management staff to worked and leave taken."

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The Web TCAS timesheet is designed with everything on one page.

CAMS password.

"After the conversion, Jacks said. employees will continue to submit reimbursable sheets to their timekeeper. The reimbursable sheets are very important. They allow program managers and

resources can reset the correctly track hours spent working on these projects,"

> "However, clock hour sheets will no longer be required," she said. "Web TCAS allows employees to directly enter changes in their tour of duty, extra hours

The Arkansas Conservation News is published monthly by the Arkansas Natural Resources Conservation Service.

Please send submissions to:

Creston Shrum, Editor; Room 3416, Federal Bldg.; 700 W. Capitol Ave.; Little Rock, AR 72201 Phone: (501) 301-3168; Fax: (501) 301-3189; E-mail: Creston.Shrum@ar.usda.gov

All submissions are the property of NRCS and may be edited for content or space limitations.

Grand Prairie __

(Continued from Page 1)

throughout the area.

September 2001

"The project will preserve the alluvial and Sparta aquifers by providing supplemental irrigation water to approximately 240,000 acres of cropland," Stevenson "Additionally, 38,000 acres of cropland will be seasonally flooded to provide fall and winter feeding and nesting areas for waterfowl."

The delivery system will consist of new canals, existing streams and new pipelines. Water will be pumped from the White River into the delivery system and transported to individual farms.

On-farm conservation practices will consist of storage reservoirs, pipelines, water control structures and tailwater recovery systems.

On-farm water storage reservoirs will be constructed on individual farms, will generally be enclosed by levees, and will be filled by pumping.

The reservoirs will be filled during late winter and early spring from natural run-off captured through the tailwater recovery systems or from the delivery system when natural run-off is inadequate.

During the cropping season, water will be supplied to the crops from natural run-off captured by tailwater recovery systems, the delivery system, reservoirs and wells.

The Grand Prairie Project area Monroe and Prairie counties. The project area is approximately 50 miles in length and averages approximately near its the center.

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers funding for implementation of on-farm measures has been estimated at \$25 million for FY 01, and \$55 million for 176.8 miles of irrigation pipeline. the next three to five years. Seventeen NRCS employees are planning, surveying, designing and overseeing



Tailwater recovery systems capture runoff and tailwater for future use.



Arkansas Conservation News

Bob Fooks, water management engineer, inspects a flow meter on a pumping plant.

construction of the on-farm practices.

The Corps of Engineers will fund approximately \$1.5 million in NRCS technical assistance in FY 01 and an additional \$8.5 million in the next three to five years.

"There have been 216 contracts covers parts of Arkansas, Lonoke, signed with a federal cost share of more than \$20 million and a total construction cost of more than \$30 million.

Practices planned with contracts 15 miles wide with Stuttgart located signed include 109 new reservoirs totaling 2,365 surface acres; 43 rebuilt reservoirs totaling 3,520 surface acres; 167 tailwater pits totaling 2,161 acre feet of storage; 321 relift pumps and

> The contracts include more than 16,000 acres of cropland with water control structures for waterfowl flooding.



Page 3

Workers install irrigation pipelines to improve on-farm irrigation efficiencies and conserve water.